

2018 national curriculum assessments

Key stage 1

2018 access arrangements guidance

December 2017



**Standards
& Testing
Agency**

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1. Introduction

This guidance details the access arrangements available for pupils participating in the 2018 key stage 1 (KS1) national curriculum tests. It also informs schools how to use them appropriately.

Some pupils with specific needs may need additional arrangements so they can take part in the KS1 tests. Access arrangements are adjustments that can be put in place to support those pupils. Headteachers and teachers must consider whether any of their pupils will need access arrangements before they administer the tests.

Access arrangements should be based primarily on normal classroom practice and they must never provide an unfair advantage. The support given must not change the test questions and the answers must be the pupils' own. Failure to administer access arrangements appropriately could result in a maladministration investigation.

It may be helpful to use KS1 [practice materials](#)¹ with pupils before administering the tests. This will enable schools to identify where additional support is needed and if any adaptations will need to be made, either to the test materials or to their administration.

Section 5.2 of the [2018 KS1 assessment and reporting arrangements](#)²(ARA) provides a summary of who access arrangements are for and how they can be used. Access arrangements might be used to support pupils who have:

- difficulty reading
- difficulty writing
- difficulty concentrating
- processing difficulties
- to use sign language
- a hearing impairment
- a visual impairment

Due to the diversity of pupils' needs, this guidance does not list every circumstance where it would be appropriate to use access arrangements. When planning for the tests schools should think of any needs their pupils have and whether they receive additional support as part of normal classroom practice. Some pupils may not be able to access the tests, despite the provision of additional arrangements.

¹ www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/2018-key-stage-1-assessment-and-reporting-arrangements-ara

2. Additional time

Schools do not need to make applications for additional time for the KS1 tests. The tests are not strictly timed so schools can give pupils the amount of time they feel is appropriate to enable each pupil to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. However, schools should consider a particular pupil's needs and the access arrangements detailed in this guidance, before making a decision about giving a pupil additional time to complete a test.

Pupils using the modified large print (MLP) and braille versions of the tests may need more time to complete the tests than pupils using the standard versions. Schools should consider how much additional time these pupils will need before administering the tests.

3. Scribes

A scribe is a writing assistant who writes out answers dictated by the pupil. Schools should consider using a word processor or making a transcript of the pupil's writing after the test before deciding to use a scribe. A scribe should only be used if other options are not appropriate and if it is part of normal classroom practice for that pupil. A scribe may also be used in the case of injuries, when the pupil is unable to write and where use of a scribe would not be part of normal classroom practice.

A scribe can be used when a pupil is physically:

- unable to write their own answers or use a word processor
- unable to write following an injury
- able to write but has a motor impairment that causes physical discomfort when writing
- able to write but writes very slowly
- able to write but finds writing very difficult

Schools should arrange for a scribe in advance if they are aware that a pupil might need a scribe part way through the test. A scribe may be needed for a pupil:

- who is known to experience fatigue
- with a visual or motor impairment and who writes over their own handwriting, which needs to be made clear

In these circumstances, the pupil may start the test as normal and begin to use a scribe when needed.

Using a scribe

Scribes must be able to write legibly and at a reasonable speed. They may also act as a reader (for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling and/or mathematics tests only). Scribes must not be another pupil or a relative, carer or guardian of the pupil.

The scribe must:

- only make a correction on a script if asked to do so by the pupil
- work at the pupil's pace and not hurry them if they need time for reflection, rest or reading
- follow the pupil's instructions precisely to draw or add to diagrams, charts and graphs in the mathematics tests

For the mathematics and English reading tests, the scribe should not pause for spellings to be dictated unless the pupil usually works in this way.

For the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test Paper 1: spelling, the scribe must pause for each spelling to be dictated.

For the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test Paper 2: questions, correct spelling is required for questions assessing contracted forms, verb forms, plurals, prefixes and suffixes. The scribe must pause for relevant spellings to be dictated. All language, punctuation and phrasing must be the pupil's own.

4. Word processors or other technical or electronic aids

If it is normal classroom practice, pupils may use word processors or other technical or electronic aids in the tests, provided the functionality does not give the pupil an unfair advantage.

Schools must test the functionality of the equipment by using the KS1 [practice materials](#)³. If there is functionality that cannot be turned off that would provide the pupil with an unfair advantage, the pupil must not use the equipment. The school may arrange for the test to be read to the pupil or for a scribe to record the pupil's answers instead.

Schools should ensure that pupils regularly save their work, as a pupil should not restart a test if their work is lost.

Mathematics and English grammar, punctuation and spelling

Pupils may use word processors or other technical or electronic aids during the mathematics and optional English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests provided that:

- it is normal classroom practice
- the equipment does not read mathematical symbols in the mathematics tests or punctuation in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests
- any spell checking function the equipment may feature is turned off for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests
- the equipment is used on a one-to-one basis, preferably in a separate room to the rest of the cohort

English reading

Word processors or other technical or electronic aids may be used to record pupils' answers in the English reading test. This includes spell checkers, if they do not give definitions of words. They must not be used to provide reading support, other than to read the general instructions on page 3 of the reading answer booklet.

³ www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials

5. Written or oral translations of the mathematics tests

Written translations of the mathematics tests can be made in advance and oral translations may be given by a translator as the test is administered. Pupils may write their responses in English or in their first language. If a pupil's answers are not in English, then the pupil's usual translator should transcribe the answers in English after the test.

Notes for translators

Translators need to bear in mind that pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) may not be familiar with some subject-specific vocabulary and technical terms in their preferred language. Translators may want to review the test paper to check for any unfamiliar vocabulary before the test is administered.

As KS1 tests can be administered throughout May 2018, schools must not open test materials early to prepare translations. Schools should consider either administering the tests to particular pupils that need translations after the initial administration of the tests, using the opened test materials to make the necessary arrangements. Alternatively, schools can make translations using downloadable versions, which will be available on [NCA tools](https://ncatools.education.gov.uk)⁴ from Tuesday 1 May.

A translator must not be another pupil or a relative, carer or guardian of the pupil requiring a translation.

English reading and English grammar, punctuation and spelling

Translations cannot be made for the English reading or the English grammar, punctuation and spelling tests, other than for:

- the general instructions on the cover of the question papers
- any directions that are not part of the actual questions

No help may be given with reading or understanding the questions or passages of text on which questions are based.

⁴ <https://ncatools.education.gov.uk>

6. Readers

The use of a reader should be normal classroom practice. Readers are usually teachers or support assistants. They should not be another pupil or a relative, carer or guardian of the pupil.

English reading

Readers cannot be used during the English reading test, except where the test administration instructions allow. Please refer to the specific instructions that are included within the test pack.

English grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics

If a pupil has difficulty reading then they may use a reader for the mathematics test and the optional English grammar, punctuation and spelling test. [Notes for readers in the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test](#)⁵ gives examples of how particular types of questions should be read aloud to a pupil.

Although it is preferable for a reader to be provided on a one-to-one basis, KS1 test administrators may choose to read the English grammar, punctuation and spelling or mathematics questions aloud to a pupil, a group of pupils or the whole class. Where questions are being read to a group of pupils, test administrators must consider the individual needs of the pupils to ensure they are not disadvantaged by the pace at which any text is read.

If a pupil requests it, the reader may also read back any part of a pupil's written response to a question.

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/notes-for-readers-in-the-english-grammar-punctuation-and-spelling-test-short-answer-questions

7. Prompters

A pupil with severe attention problems may be supported by a prompter. The use of a prompter must be normal classroom practice.

Prompters should:

- agree the best way to prompt the pupil before the test begins
- be the pupil's own learning support assistant
- be used on a one-to-one basis

Prompters must:

- only be used to draw the pupil's attention back to the task
- not do anything that could be interpreted as over-aiding the pupil, as this could lead to a maladministration investigation
- not advise the pupil on which questions to answer or advise when to move on to the next question
- not advise or guide the pupil on the order in which they should attempt the questions
- not be another pupil or a relative, carer or guardian of the pupil

If a pupil finds it difficult to concentrate on individual questions, the school may choose to use adhesive notes or stickers to cover other questions on the page. In these circumstances, the whole question the pupil is currently working on should remain uncovered. This should only be done when it is in line with support the pupil normally receives in class.

8. Modifications to test papers

Schools can make their own modifications to test papers where necessary, such as photocopying the papers onto coloured paper, enhancing diagrams and enlarging text.

KS1 tests can be administered throughout May 2018. Schools must not open test materials early to make modifications. Schools should consider administering the tests to particular pupils that need school-based modifications after the initial administration of the tests, using the opened test materials to make the necessary arrangements. Alternatively, schools can modify the downloadable versions, which will be available on [NCA tools](https://ncatools.education.gov.uk)⁶ from Tuesday 1 May.

Early opening

Schools do not need to make applications for early opening to modify test materials because KS1 tests can be administered throughout May 2018. If schools need to make modifications to test papers to meet a pupil's needs, or if translators or signers need access to the papers to prepare, they must not open test materials before Tuesday 1 May.

In these instances, schools should consider administering the tests to particular pupils that need the specific access arrangements after the initial administration of the tests, using the opened test materials to make the necessary arrangements. Alternatively, schools can use the downloadable versions, which will be available on NCA tools from Tuesday 1 May.

⁶ <https://ncatools.education.gov.uk>

9. Compensatory marks for the spelling paper

Some pupils with a hearing impairment will not be able to access the spelling paper of the optional English grammar, punctuation and spelling test. Raw scores from both English grammar, punctuation and spelling papers are needed to give an overall scaled score for the test. Compensatory marks allow pupils with a profound hearing impairment to receive an overall test outcome for the English grammar, punctuation and spelling test.

A compensatory mark for the spelling test will be available to schools, by request, from the national curriculum assessments helpline on 0300 303 3013 at the beginning of June.

Schools should add the compensatory mark for spelling to the raw score from the English grammar, punctuation and spelling Paper 2: questions, before converting the overall raw score to a scaled score.

10. Other arrangements

Rest breaks

The majority of pupils should be able to complete the tests without a break. However, if a pupil finds it difficult to concentrate for long periods of time, or experiences fatigue, the school might want to split the test into sections and allow the pupil a rest break. The content of the test must not be discussed during rest breaks.

In extreme situations, schools may consider splitting a KS1 test so it is administered over more than one day. Schools must ensure the test paper is split so the pupil does not have access to any questions that may be administered on a subsequent day. Schools do not need permission from STA to do this.

Transcripts

If it will be very difficult to read a pupil's writing when marking the test script, schools should consider making a transcript of the pupil's answers. If a transcript is made, it should be done with the pupil present at the end of the test using a different coloured pen from that used by the pupil.

Pupils who cannot read their own writing could use a word processor or scribe, if this is normal classroom practice.

Pupils who are absent

KS1 tests do not have a fixed timetable and can be administered to separate groups or individuals during the test administration window throughout May. If a pupil is absent on the school's planned day for the administration of a test, it may be administered to that pupil on their return to school, providing that the test is administered in May.

If pupils take KS1 tests at a different time from the rest of the cohort, schools do not need to notify STA.

Administering tests at an alternative location

At the headteacher's discretion, test(s) may be administered to one or more pupils at an alternative location to the rest of the cohort, away from the school. The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that the security and confidentiality of the test(s) is maintained and the test(s) are administered in accordance with the test administration instructions.

If schools need specific advice about administering tests at an alternative location, they should contact STA using 'Message us' in the 'Access arrangements' section of [NCA tools](https://ncatools.education.gov.uk)⁷.

Apparatus in the mathematics test

If a pupil has difficulty accessing two-dimensional diagrams, schools may give them real objects that look like those illustrated in the mathematics tests.

Schools may consider administering the mathematics tests to these pupils after they have been administered to other pupils. Alternatively, schools can review the downloadable versions of the tests on NCA tools, so they know which questions may require the apparatus.

⁷ <https://ncatools.education.gov.uk>

11. Further information

Modified tests

Schools can discuss the suitability of, and order MLP and braille versions of KS1 tests by contacting the modified test agency:

Email: staconflog.mailbox@rnib.org.uk

Telephone: 0300 303 3019

Message us

For queries relating to access arrangements to meet a pupil's specific needs, schools can 'Message us' via the 'Access arrangements' section of [NCA tools](#)⁸.

General enquiries

For general enquiries about access arrangements:

National curriculum assessments helpline: 0300 303 3013

Email: assessments@education.gov.uk

⁸ <https://ncatools.education.gov.uk>



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